



# Recycle This! Newsletter

Newsletter of the Maine State Planning Office, Waste Management & Recycling Program \* December 1999

## Maine Recycles Week - Highlights of 1999 and Plans for 2000!

### Maine Recycles Week 1999

The first annual Maine Recycles Week 1999, November 8th through the 15th, was held in conjunction with America Recycles Day, a nationwide effort to promote recycling and the purchase of recycled content products. Maine municipalities, schools, and businesses were encouraged to participate in Maine Recycles Week (MRW) by celebrating or promoting recycling and/or buying recycled during the week of November 8-15.



### Municipal Participation

Fourteen municipalities reported to SPO that they celebrated MRW by holding special recycling related events.

Those communities were: Arundel, Bangor, Bethel, Boothbay Brunswick, Clifton, Hancock (Coastal Recycling), Kennebunk, Livermore, Pittsfield, Sabbathus, Scarborough, South Portland, and Waterboro.

While the most common municipal event was an open house at the local recycling center, activities ranged from presentations at local schools to events at local supermarkets. For more information on specific municipal events, please visit our web site at: [www.state.me.us/spo/mrweek.htm](http://www.state.me.us/spo/mrweek.htm).

In addition to the 14 reported municipal "events," several other municipalities participated in MRW by encouraging residents to fill out pledge cards.

### Pledge Contests

As part of America Recycles Day, people all over the country were asked to make a pledge to: increase recycling efforts at home and at work, buy more products with recycled content, and/or participate in any other recycling related activity. By filling out these pledge cards, residents nationwide entered themselves into a national drawing.



In addition to the national contest, many states, including Maine, held their own drawings to encourage increased pledging. SPO received 1864 pledge cards from all over the state, including electronic pledges. This is

well more than double the number of pledges made by Mainers in 1998!

**National Contest:** The Grand Prize, to be drawn December 15, 2000, is the American Green Dream House, which is made from primarily recycled content materials. Youth prizes will be drawn on December 15, 1999 and include 25 remanufactured computers and a 2-night trip for four to Disney World.



**State Contest:** The state prize was a Discovery 158 Canoe, donated by Old Town Canoe. The prize drawing was held on November 23, 1999. The winner of the Discovery 158 was the LeGloahec family of Lisbon Falls. (MRW cont'd on page 2)

## Maine Recycles Week 1999 SUMMARY

**Pledges:** 1864 (up from 700 in 1998)

**Participating Schools:** 23 (up from 0 in 1998)

**Municipal Events:** 14 (up from 10 in 1998)

**Special thanks to the following companies who generously contributed to MRW 1999:** Maine Energy Recovery Company, Penobscot Energy Recovery Company, Commercial Recycling Systems, and Old Town Canoe

**Special thanks to the MRW Steering Committee members:** Maine Energy Recovery Company, Commercial Recycling Systems, Hannaford Brothers Co., Androscoggin Valley Council of Governments, Kennebec Valley Council of Governments, Maine Resource Recovery Association, WasteCap of ME/Buy Recycled Business Alliance, City of Portland, US Postal Service, Town of Clinton, Gardiner Paperboard, Great Northern Recycling, State of Maine Division of Purchases, and State Planning Office.

**MRW web site:** [www.state.me.us/spo/mrweek.htm](http://www.state.me.us/spo/mrweek.htm)





### ***School Participation***

23 schools across the state officially participated in Maine Recycles Week. School participation ranged from the incorporation of waste management related activities into the curriculum to establishing a new recycling program. Each participating school was entered in a drawing for one of five \$500 cash prizes. The five winners are: Hartland Consolidated School, Stevens Brook Elementary School, Brooksville Elementary School, Loranger Junior High School, and Mount Vernon School. The funds for the school drawing were donated by: Maine Energy Recovery Company, Penobscot Energy Recovery Company, and Commercial Recycling Systems.

For information on individual schools and the events that they held, please visit the MRW web site at: [www.state.me.us/spo/mrweek.htm](http://www.state.me.us/spo/mrweek.htm).

### ***Business Participation***

While many municipalities worked with local businesses to coordinate events, SPO also heard from several businesses who wanted to take a more proactive role in Maine Recycles Week. These businesses held their own events, such as employee pledge drives and recycled content displays, to promote recycling and the purchase of recycled content products.

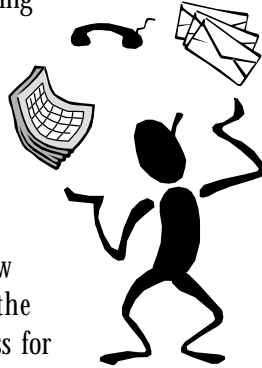
For more information on individual business events, please visit the MRW web site at: [www.state.me.us/spo/mrweek.htm](http://www.state.me.us/spo/mrweek.htm).

## **Maine Recycles Week 2000!**

This was the first year that Maine Recycles Week was celebrated. As with any new project, MRW 1999 was a learning experience. We plan to continue celebrating MRW on an annual basis and have learned many valuable lessons from this year's endeavor.

### ***A Year-Long Effort***

We started planning for MRW 1999 in early August, and while we thought we were getting off to an early start, we now realize that the planning process for MRW should be a year-long effort. In keeping with this thought, we will be selecting the Steering Committee for MRW 2000 in January of 2000. If you would like to be part of the Steering Committee, please contact either Shannon Haines (287-8053 or [shannon.haines@state.me.us](mailto:shannon.haines@state.me.us)) or Sam Morris (287-8054 or [sam.morris@state.me.us](mailto:sam.morris@state.me.us)).



### ***Goals for MRW 2000***

One of the first jobs of the MRW 2000 Steering Committee will be to set specific goals that we hope to achieve, such as number of pledges, events, etc. The following are general goals for MRW 2000:

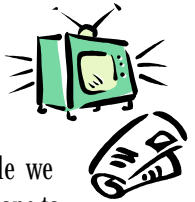
#### **Increased participation**

SPO was very pleased with the number of

schools, municipalities, and businesses that participated in MRW 1999, but we would like to see those numbers doubled in MRW 2000. Despite numerous mailings to both schools and municipalities, there were still many people who did not know about MRW. Next year, we will find ways to address this communication gap and increase participation on every level.

#### **Increased media coverage**

MRW 1999 was covered to some degree by nearly every newspaper and television station in the state. While we consider this a success, we hope to have a more unified media campaign next year. This will involve contacting the media very early in the year and obtaining solid commitments regarding coverage of MRW. One possibility would be to invite a media representative to sit on the Steering Committee.



#### **Increased number of pledges**

We received 1864 pledges from Maine residents this year. Although this is more than double the pledges we received last year, it still represents far less than 1% of the population. We hope to more than double the number of pledges again next year.

***SPO would like to offer special thanks to all those whose efforts contributed to the success of MRW 1999. We thank you for your participation and enthusiasm and we look forward to working with you in the future.***

## **Help SPO Create the Next Series of Municipal Workshops!**

State Planning Office (SPO) wants to get your input regarding our next series of workshops. We are planning to hold workshops in multiple locations throughout the state in late winter of 2000, but we have yet to nail down the workshop topics. Please contact us and let us know what topics you would like to see us cover. You may contact us via e-mail at [shannon.haines@state.me.us](mailto:shannon.haines@state.me.us) or via fax at 207-287-6489. You may also call our office at 1-800-662-4545 and ask to speak with Shannon Haines.

***Potential Topics:*** Creating Municipal Ordinances; Accounting Systems; Recycling Programs in Schools; Breaking Down Solid Waste Costs; etc. Let us know how you feel about these and suggest your own! We look forward to getting your input!

# Holiday Waste Reduction & Recycling Tips



The holiday season, with all of its associated buying, wrapping and celebrating, substantially increases the amount of waste that we generate. There are, however, many opportunities for the consumer to reduce, reuse, and recycle the remnants of holiday cheer. Listed below are some tips for reducing household waste during the holiday season:

## Give Your Christmas Tree a Second Chance

Buy an evergreen in a pot or with a rootball wrapped in burlap to transplant after New Year's. (Dig a hole before the ground freezes.)



## Recycle Christmas Trees

Some communities recycle Christmas trees by chipping and mulching them for compost or landscaping materials. Trees must be free of tinsel, decorations, and other foreign materials. In those communities that don't offer Christmas tree recycling, residents can still recycle tree trunks for firewood or kindling and use the branches as mulch under acid-loving bushes & shrubs.

## Donate Replaced Items to Charity

New gifts will often replace appliances and clothes that still have a useful life. Collect these items and donate them to Goodwill, Salvation Army, local churches, daycare centers or charity groups. See if your town has a "bargain barn" or "swap shop."

## Recycle Cardboard Boxes

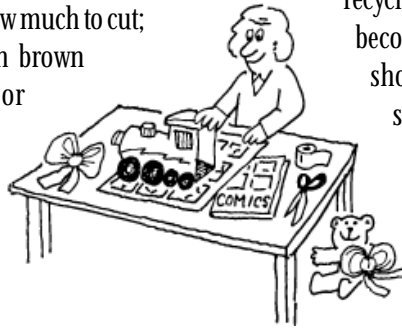
The holiday season creates a tremendous amount of cardboard waste. Be sure to separate corrugated cardboard, bundle it, and take it to your local recycling center. Check first to see if your local area accepts cardboard and how it should be prepared.

## Reduce, Reuse, and Recycle Gift Wrap

- Just add bows to holiday shopping bags or gift boxes instead of wrapping;



- Buy gift wrap made from recycled paper. Avoid wrapping paper with foil highlights as it cannot be recycled;
- Only use the amount of wrap that you need. Loop string around gift boxes, then lay it out on paper to determine how much to cut;
- Wrap gifts in brown paper bags or newspaper - use the cartoon section for brighter colors.
- Wrap gifts in festive holiday fabric, dish towels, or bandanas, which can simply be washed and reused.
- Give gifts in baskets, tins or jars;
- Save bows, ribbons, and paper to reuse next year. Shred wrapping paper to use as filler or instead of tissue.



## Tips for Holiday Shopping

- When shopping, use reusable canvas bags to carry purchases. Refuse a bag for small purchases. Ask for the box that the product came in or get a clothing box for the item instead of collecting both a box and a bag;
- Choose products that are minimally packaged;
- Purchase items made from recycled

materials.

## Tips for Giving

Be prudent and practical as well as thoughtful and creative. Purchase gifts that are long-lasting or that can be reused and later recycled. Avoid "gag gifts" as they quickly become trash. Secondhand or antique shops are great places to do holiday shopping. Consider giving gift certificates or tickets for services or special events rather than purchasing an item that may not be used or needed.

## Tips for Holiday Parties

- Use cloth napkins, silverware, glass drinking cups and ceramic coffee mugs, and reusable plates rather than disposable plastic, Styrofoam, or paper at holiday parties;
- Rent party furnishings rather than buying things that you will only use once a year;
- Reuse plastic margarine tubs or yogurt containers to store holiday leftovers.

## Reuse Holiday Cards

- Cut the picture side of the card off and reuse it as a card, postcard, or gift tag;
- You can also send the picture side of cards to: St. Jude's Ranch for Children, PO Box 985, Boulder City, NV 89005, where the cards are used for fund-raising;
- Recycle cards that can't be reused.

*If you would like to distribute these Holiday Waste Reduction & Recycling Tips directly to your residents, simply insert your community information here and photocopy on colorful paper. You can then distribute the sheets at local businesses and the Town Office, or you could even do a mailing to residents. You can also reach the community by submitting these tips, along with your local information, to the local newspaper and/or radio station. Be sure to include details on Christmas tree recycling opportunities, collection schedules, whether you accept wrapping paper for recycling, etc.*

Maine State Planning Office  
Waste Management & Recycling Program  
38 State House Station  
Augusta, ME 04333-0038  
1-800-662-4545 or 207-287-8050  
[www.state.me.us/spo/wm&r/wmhome.htm](http://www.state.me.us/spo/wm&r/wmhome.htm)

## Municipal Recycling Data Packet Available from SPO

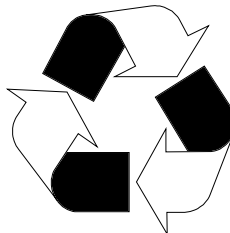
For the first time, the Waste Management & Recycling Program at SPO is offering a summary of state-wide municipal recycling data that has been compiled from the Annual Municipal Report Forms.

SPO has tabulated the municipal solid waste program data submitted to the State Planning Office for the calendar year 1998 in a report, entitled 1998 Municipally Submitted Solid Waste Management Data. The data in this report represents 98% of Maine's population, including data from 208 individual municipalities and 51 regional associations representing 274 communities.

In addition to the 1998 data, the municipal recycling data packet also presents some analysis of all six years of recycling data collected by SPO. Summary information of state-wide data from 1993-1998 indicates that residential recycling has increased each year. The amount of municipal solid waste incinerated and landfilled has remained fairly constant from 1993-1998, while the amount of bulky waste disposal has increased.

For a copy of the 1998 Municipally Submitted Solid Waste Management Data and the 1998 Recycling Summary, contact:

**Hank Tyler at 207-287-1489 or [hank.tyler@state.me.us](mailto:hank.tyler@state.me.us).**



## Coming Soon

It's almost that time again! The **1999 Municipal Solid Waste Annual Report Package** will soon be arriving in the mail. Look for it in **early January!**

SPO is planning to hold another series of **municipal workshops** in **late winter of 2000**. Please see the inset on page 2 for more information.

The **Annual Recycling & Solid Waste Conference** at **The Samoset Resort** in Rockport will take place on **April 10 & 11, 2000**. For more information, call 207-942-6772.